



The Golden State | Lesson Plan

What are the unique facts and features about the state of California?

Students will understand that the United States is one country, but each state in the Union is different. Students will learn nine facts that make the state of California unique.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify and locate the state of California on a map, understanding its geographical positioning among the 50 states.
- Know the abbreviation for the state of California and be able to spell its name.
- Describe nine unique characteristics of California, including aspects of its history, climate, and cultural significance.

Key Vocabulary:

- **National Parks:** Protected natural areas preserved for scenic beauty, wildlife, and historical value.
- **Diverse Climate:** Various weather conditions in different regions, such as beaches with sun, dry deserts, lush forests, and mountains with snow.
- **California Missions:** Spanish settlements built in the 18th and 19th centuries to spread Christianity to Native Americans, featuring a church, living quarters, workshops, and farmland
- **California Gold Rush:** A period in 1849 when many people rushed to California to find gold, leading to rapid population growth and development.

Educational Standards: CCRA.R.1, CCRA.R.7, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.W.7, CCRA.W.8

Academic Subjects: America, History, Geography

What You'll Need

- Video: *Unboxed, USA: The Golden State* (Click [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Unboxed, USA: Game Map* (Click [Here](#))
- Students will need a writing instrument and colors (map pencil, crayons, markers, etc.)

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Begin by exploring the concept of the United States as a unified country with diverse states, each with its unique history, landscape, and characteristics. Reflect on the meaning of the word "United" in "United States" and its significance.
2. Introduce the "Unboxed, USA: Game Map," explaining the instructions and emphasizing the mystery element of identifying one of the fifty states through clues.

Scan to watch episode:



Watch and Complete: (25 mins.)

1. Explain that students will play a game to discover the mystery state.
2. Play the video. Encourage active participation and observational skills.
3. Pause the video as needed to allow students time to process information, make educated guesses, and understand key points in greater depth.
4. Take time to go over key vocabulary and historical elements for the state of California.

Wrap-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Facilitate a review of the nine key facts about California, encouraging students to articulate their learning and contribute their insights either verbally or by writing on the board.
2. Consider collecting the completed activities as a formative assessment to gauge understanding and engagement with the lesson's content.

Optional Extension Lesson:

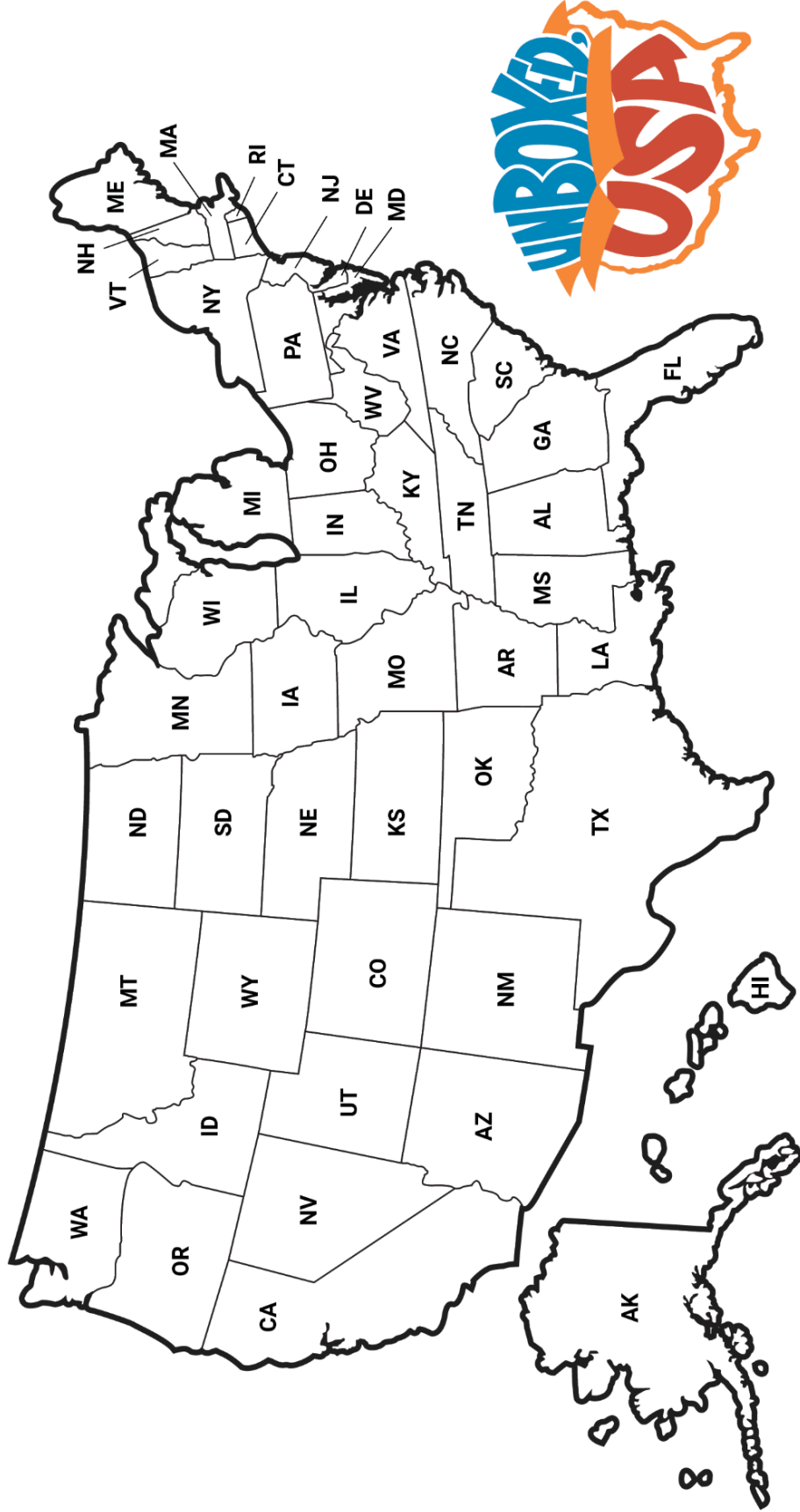
- Analyze the role of the Electoral College in the presidential election process, considering its impact on state representation, the balance of power between states, and its alignment with the principles of federalism outlined in the U.S. Constitution.
 - *Street Smarts: The Constitution* (Video and educational resources [Here](#))
 - *Street Smarts: The Electoral College* (Video and educational resources [Here](#))
 - *Craftory: Ballot Box* (Video and educational resources [Here](#))
- Analyze the concept of federalism and its impact on the relationship between state and national governments, as outlined in the U.S. Constitution.
 - *Street Smarts: Federalism* (Video and educational resources [Here](#))
 - *Leo & Layla: Madison & Montesquieu* (Video and educational resources [Here](#))
 - *Leo & Layla: John Adams & Thomas Jefferson* (Video and educational resources [Here](#))
 - *Leo & Layla: Justice John Marshall* (Video and educational resources [Here](#))

Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15 mins.)

Distribute the game map and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.

Instructions:

Play along with the *Unboxed, USA* video. After the first three clues, mark your initial guess with a "1" on the state you think it is. Start jotting down any important facts on the lines provided. After the next three clues, make your second guess by marking a "2" on the state you think it is. Continue adding facts to your list. Following the last set of three clues, make your final guess and mark it with a "3." Were you correct? Put a star on the correct state and write it out on the line provided. Aim to have a list of six key facts by the end of the episode.



Fact 1

Fact 4

Fact 2

Fact 5

Fact 3

Fact 6

State Name